

**City of Greensboro Planning Department  
Generalized Future Land Use Map Plan Amendment  
January 19, 2004 Public Hearing**

*The information provided in this staff report has been included for the purpose of reviewing proposed Future Land Use Map Amendments. In considering amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, the City shall be guided by factors that include, but are not limited to: the need for the proposed change; the effect of the proposed change on the need for city services and facilities; the implications, if any, that the amendment may have for other parts of the plan; and unforeseen circumstances or the emergence of new information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3). Plan Amendments are heard by the Planning Board, and recommended to the City Council for final action.*

**Case Number:** CP-04-07

**Request:** To amend the Generalized Future Land Use map (Figure 4-2) of the Greensboro Connections 2025 Comprehensive Plan for properties in the vicinity of the northwest corner of the intersection of Coliseum Boulevard stretching from Coliseum Boulevard to Willomore Street **from the Low Residential Land Use Classification to the Mixed Use Commercial Land Use Classification.**

**Location:** Freeman Mill/Coliseum Boulevard/Lovett Street

**Size:** 16.36 acres

**Existing Land Use:** Gateway Business Center, NC Department of Motor Vehicles, and an undeveloped parcel on Coliseum Boulevard

**CONNECTIONS 2025 LAND USE CLASSIFICATION**

**Existing: Low Residential (3 to 5 dwelling units per gross acre)**

This category includes the City's predominantly single-family neighborhoods as well as other compatible housing types that can be accommodated within this density range. Although there are some existing residential areas in the City developed on lots greater than 1/3 acre, future residential developments and "conventional" subdivisions should generally maintain a gross density of no less than three dwellings per acre, except where environmental constraints (e.g., the Watershed Critical Area) prevent such densities from being achieved. Compact developments that include clustered, small lots with substantial retained open space are encouraged.

### **Proposed: Mixed Use Commercial**

This designation is intended to promote a mix of uses, of which various commercial uses remain predominant, but where residential, service, and other uses are complementary. Where applied to older highway corridors characterized by "strip" commercial uses, the intent is to encourage infill and redevelopment for a more diverse and attractive mix of uses over time. Examples include residential units over commercial uses or a wider array of economically viable uses to replace obsolete uses. Such areas also may represent opportunities for the introduction of substantial higher density and/or mixed-income housing, with negligible impacts on, or resistance from, nearby single-family neighborhoods. Ensuring that buildings are of the appropriate scale and intensity is critical, as is ensuring that sites are designed in a coordinated, as opposed to a lot-by-lot, manner.

## **CONNECTIONS 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES**

*The following policies are applicable in this case:*

### **REINVESTMENT/INFILL**

Goal: Promote sound investment in Greensboro's urban areas, including Center City, commercial and industrial areas, and neighborhoods

#### **POLICIES**

4C. Promote **new patterns and intensities of use** to increase economic competitiveness and **enhance quality of life** in urban areas

4C.1 Establish standards for and actively promote new forms of **compact development** to include Transit-Oriented Development, as well as TND, Pedestrian Scale Development, and **Mixed-Use**.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Goal: Promote a healthy, diversified economy with a strong tax base and opportunities for employment, entrepreneurship and for-profit and non-profit economic development for all segments of the community, including under-served areas such as East Greensboro

#### **POLICY**

7C. Ensure that city land use policies and regulations allow for an adequate supply of land to accommodate economic development

## **STAFF ANALYSIS**

**Need for the Proposed Change:** Comprehensive Plan policies encourage mixed use centers and more diversified patterns of land uses and activities. By approving this node of mixed use, it will acknowledge the services that have recently been established and it will

encourage the provision of additional services for an area that has not had direct access to a variety of services. The provision of this node could reduce auto trips by providing services and employment opportunities within a walkable distance of the nearby neighborhoods.

**Effect of the proposed Change on the Need for City Services and Facilities (e.g. roadway level of service, traffic counts, planned road improvements, transit, accidents statistics, and environmental constraints such as; location within a Water Supply Watershed, floodplain, streams):**

Transportation

This node of activity will support the bus rapid transit station that is proposed at the intersection of Coliseum Boulevard and Freeman Mill Road.

Major Road improvements have already been made at the intersection of Freeman Mill Road and Coliseum Boulevard.

Environmental

Stormwater flows into South Buffalo Creek and this area is not in a water-supply watershed. Possible on-site detention will be required to meet quantity ordinance when undeveloped parcels are developed. One unclassified channel on the undeveloped parcel will require a buffer if it is perennial. If perennial, it requires a 50' buffer on each side measured from top of bank, top of steep slope, or edge of contiguous wetlands (whichever produces a greater buffer). The first 15' of the buffer is undisturbed and the next 35' can have no occupied structures and a maximum of 50% BUA.

The site may potentially have wetlands. If any disturbance to wetlands is proposed and/or any stream crossing is proposed, permits will have to be obtained from the state and Corps of Engineers prior to construction.

The 100 yr floodplain just touches the western property line but does not appear to encroach onto the property.

**Implications, if any, the Amendment may have for Other Parts of the Plan:** In the process of reviewing this case staff field surveyed the area to establish the boundaries of the map amendment. The area north of the proposed change, with the exception of the tract recently amended to Mixed Use Commercial by City Council, consists of a stable single family neighborhood.

The area to the southeast consists of a mix of single family and multi-family residences. Citizens of this area are in the process of establishing a neighborhood association to help stabilize their neighborhood. This area also contains a small pocket of commercial uses on the north and south sides of Coliseum Boulevard at its intersection with Freeman Mill

Road. These uses appear to be stable and serve the adjacent neighborhoods, but they are a very small pocket that should be discouraged from expanding further into the neighborhood and therefore it does not justify a need to change the land use classification on that side of Freeman Mill Road.

The area to the southwest is also characterized as a stable single family neighborhood that is somewhat isolated from this node by Coliseum Boulevard and the heavily wooded, rough terrain of undeveloped land along the south side of Coliseum Boulevard.

In light of the surrounding land uses, the nature of the available land for development, and the opportunities to provide additional services to this area, staff does not see any negative implications to this change in land use classification.

**Unforeseen Circumstances or the Emergence of New Information (e.g. significant economic opportunity in Tier 2 or 3):** When Connections 2025 was being drafted this area had not yet evolved into the service node that it is today. With the development of the NC DMV facility, the Gateway Business Center and the recently approved mixed use office building on Lovett Street, this area has the potential to become a service node for the surrounding neighborhoods.

## CONFORMITY WITH OTHER PLANS

*The following aspects of relevant plans may be applicable in this case:*

**City Plans:** For historical purposes, the Coliseum Boulevard/Freeman Mill Road/US 220 Corridor Study (September 1997) highlighted the Coliseum Boulevard/Freeman Mill Road intersection area. The Corridor Study mentioned that this area is an entryway to the Coliseum Complex yet there was no directly accessible commercial/service development between it and Interstates 40 and 85 and US 220 to the south. Continuing traffic increase at this intersection was mentioned and, according to GDOT, up to 35% of the vehicles leaving the coliseum use Coliseum Boulevard.

The preferred recommendation for the NCDOT lot and the adjacent Nix property to the west was to consolidate the lots for development as an Integrated Multiple Use Development (IMUD). The IMUD would involve a commercial/professional office/limited retail complex constructed so as to blend in with the natural setting, drawing a parallel to the Cornwallis Square professional office complex at the northwest corner of Cornwallis Drive and Battleground Avenue. The Corridor Study recommended that, through conditions, the percent of floor space allocated to retail could be controlled and the necessary buffer requirements could be enforced to protect surrounding residential land uses. Preferred tenants included a low impact professional office complex (e.g. health care, legal and tax offices, branch bank, and general offices similar to Cornwallis Square) and a family restaurant without drive-through service which could serve both commuters

and neighborhood residents. The Corridor Study pointed out that there were no significant office complexes in the entire corridor and only one eating establishment between the Coliseum and the intersections of US 220 and I-40 or I-85.

The Corridor Study went on to recommend that there should be zero tolerance for any further rezoning to commercial in any direction along Coliseum Boulevard, Freeman Mill Road, Lovett Street, or Meadowview Road from the node described above in order to prevent strip commercial development.

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Based on the information provided in this report, staff supports this change due to factors such as:

- provision of a mixed use center;
- provision of services and employment opportunities within walkable distance to the surrounding neighborhoods;
- location is adjacent to major roads;
- location near a proposed Bus Rapid Transit Station; and
- reduction of auto trips.

The Planning Department recommends approval of changing the land use classification from Low Residential to Mixed Use Commercial for the proposed area.